

IN RECOGNITION OF THOMAS J. KEENEY FOR HIS DEDICATION AND SERVICE TO THE WILKES-BARRE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

### HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2015*

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in recognition of Thomas J. Keeney, past Grand Knight of the Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania Knights of Columbus Council 302. Mr. Keeney was born on July 3, 1946. His father, a Major in the army, was stationed in Arkansas, Japan, and New Jersey and took the Keeney family with him as he traveled around the world. In 1964, Thomas graduated from Coughlin High School in Wilkes-Barre and currently resides in Plains with his wife, Karen.

After finishing high school, Thomas Keeney joined the air force in the winter of 1965. He was trained as an aircraft mechanic at Lackland Air Force Base and Sheppard Air Force Base. Upon completing his training, he was stationed at RAF Lakenheath Air Base in England. At Lakenheath, Thomas served as a Crew Chief on F-100D & F aircraft. While in England, Thomas married Irene V. Tucker. In the summer of 1968, they were blessed with their first son Patrick. Thomas finished his service with the air force in 1969, leaving with the rank of Sergeant.

When he returned to the United States, Thomas settled back in Wilkes-Barre and had his second child, Maurita. He took a job as a laborer at the Pressed Steel Plant on Penn Avenue. Thomas entered the apprentice program for Plumbers with Pipe Fitters Local 147 of Wilkes-Barre in 1970. He completed his apprenticeship in 1974 with Scranton's Local 90. As a journeyman plumber, he worked with many contractors in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Thomas left the construction industry to work for the City of Wilkes-Barre, as a member of the city's sewer department. In 1985, he returned to the construction industry where he worked for Penn State Mechanical as a plumber, welder, and foreman. While working with Penn State Mechanical, he obtained his Masters Certificate in Plumbing and Heating with the cities of Wilkes-Barre and Scranton. In 1995, as a Plumbing Trade Instructor for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, Thomas helped prepare inmates for a job in the plumbing trade after rehabilitation. After working for the Department of Corrections, he went on to be a caretaker for Camp Raninu and then took a position with the VA, before he retired in 2011.

Thomas Keeney also served his country with distinction as an army reservist in the 79th Army Regional Command. Starting in 1974, Thomas was a Specialist 4 Welder with the 365th Engineers of Wilkes-Barre. When he left the Engineers, Thomas had attained the rank of Sergeant. Thomas then joined the 300th Field Hospital Unit and was retrained as a combat medic. He was then promoted to Sergeant First Class and reassigned to the NCOIC of the 338th Medical Group Headquarters in Folsom, Pennsylvania. At Folsom, Thomas was responsible for the care and training of the soldiers assigned to the Medical Group Headquarters. After serving at Folsom, Thomas returned to Wilkes-Barre, where he served with the 424th Military Police Liaison

Team as the Senior Medic and Instructor. While with the 424th, Thomas was responsible for all medical and environmental issues for setup and operation of military POW camps in the U.S. and overseas. After being promoted to Master Sergeant, he was sent to the Regional Command Headquarters at Willow Grove, Pennsylvania to be a Senior Medic for the 79th ARCOM. Thomas retired from the army reserves when the 79th ARCOM was disbanded in spring 1996.

Additionally, Thomas has served as a member of the Knights of Columbus for a number of years. He has been the Grand Knight twice, first from 1998 to 2000 and recently from 2012 until 2014. He was also a District Deputy for the Pennsylvania Knights of Columbus and Faithful Navigator of the Bishop Hafey Assembly Fourth Degree Knights.

In addition, Thomas has been involved with many organizations. He was the past President of the Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick, where he currently holds the position of Secretary. He has also served as the President of Council 302 Home Association and was a former Trustee of the Plumbers Local 90.

It is an honor to recognize Mr. Keeney for his service to the Knights of Columbus and all of his achievements. He is a true patriot, and I applaud him for his dedication to his country and the work he has done for his community.

### DEDICATION TO CHARACTER AND SERVICE

### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2015*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ruben Ruiz and Shelby Lowe for being named Pearland's 2014 Employees of the Year by Pearland city management. This award is given to the public servants who best exemplify the city's core mission—to provide those who live in Pearland with the best quality of life.

Mr. Ruiz, a utility billing specialist, and Ms. Lowe, a recreation attendant, went above and beyond in performing their duties and improving the systems on which the city runs. Their dedication to service and character provide a shining example of public service and set an example we can all follow. The residents of Pearland, Texas already know what a great place they live, work and raise their families. These dedicated city employees are part of what makes Pearland special.

I thank Ruben Ruiz and Shelby Lowe for their tireless work in ensuring the Pearland community gets the customer service it deserves. On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Mr. Ruiz and Ms. Lowe for being named Pearland's 2014 Employees of the Year.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2015*

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, January 12, 2015, I was unable to be

present for a recorded vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on roll call vote No. 17, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 203, "yes" on roll call vote No. 18, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 33, and "yes" on roll call vote No. 19, on approving the Journal.

### HONORING THE WORK OF CASCO BAYKEEPER JOE PAYNE

### HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2015*

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, from my District Office in Portland, Maine, I am fortunate to have a beautiful view of Portland Harbor and Casco Bay. On a typical day, one might see cruise ships carrying thousands of visitors to our city, lobster boats setting and pulling their traps, kayakers paddling to Fort Gorges, and harbor seals popping their heads out of the water.

What's remarkable about this scene is that the bay's many uses—as a place for recreation, a source of jobs and economic activity, and habitat for marine life—coexist in a way that is not possible in many other places in the country. The bay is healthy enough to balance the needs of our community with the needs of the environment.

I rise today to recognize and celebrate a man who has worked tirelessly to strike that careful balance and maintain it. Joe Payne is the Casco Baykeeper, placing him in the very difficult job of improving and safeguarding the health of our bay. After nearly 25 years of doing that job remarkably well—as a scientist, advocate, and relationship builder—he is retiring.

Joe's accomplishments during his tenure as Baykeeper are too many to list in full, but here are some highlights. During a 1996 oil tanker spill, he pushed successfully for a quicker and more thorough response than what was initially given, preventing what could have been a disastrous impact on the bay. He launched a groundbreaking water-quality monitoring program that has mobilized 650 volunteers. He helped move 35,000 lobsters that would have been harmed or displaced by a harbor dredge. And he fought for state legislation that has kept cruise ships from dumping their wastewater into the bay.

I have had the pleasure of working with Joe over the years. Most recently, I appeared with him at a press conference where he used dye, a bowl of seawater, and a chunk of dry ice to demonstrate how climate change is making our ocean more acidic and less habitable for shellfish. The dramatic reaction was a great example of Joe's ability to draw attention to critical issues in ways that make people understand and care.

I wish my very best to Joe in retirement, though I will miss him in the role of Baykeeper. If I need any reminder of his leadership and legacy, however, all I have to do is look out the window.